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Forty-fifth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 491st MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 4 October 1994, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan)

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General debate (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

GENERAL DEBATE (agenda item 4) (continued)

1. Mr. CERVANTES VILLARREAL (Observer for Mexico), speaking on behalf of the countries members of the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA), i.e. Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Mexico, described the CIREFCA process which had begun in 1989 and had been concluded in June 1994 in Mexico City. CIREFCA had facilitated the joint search for solutions to the serious problem of refugees in Central America. The participants in CIREFCA were convinced that peace, democracy and development were inseparable and that there could be no lasting peace without action to solve the problems of the people displaced by armed conflicts. For the first time, the Conference had also established a link between refugee legislation and respect for human rights, as well as between the problem of refugees and the problem of returnees and displaced persons, by seeking flexible solutions for each of those groups.

2. All the participants in the Conference - member countries, donor countries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the United Nations system, in which a leading role had been played by successive High Commissioners for Refugees and in particular Mrs. Ogata - had contributed to the success which was now being celebrated. Through consensus and dialogue CIREFCA had found specific means of solving the problems of the people affected by conflicts in Central America. It had secured the support of the international community and had become an innovative mechanism as well as an example of international protection, all of which had provided vital support to the peace process in the region. It was now to be hoped that soon there would no longer be any refugees in Central America.

3. The countries members of CIREFCA regarded the conclusion of the process not as the end of their collaboration but, on the contrary, as a point of departure for undertaking renewed commitments and dealing more easily in the future with the serious problems remaining to be solved. At the third and final meeting of CIREFCA they had committed themselves to try to achieve even more ambitious objectives. They had in fact drawn up for the coming years a strategy for human development in a number of areas of the region where concerted national policies to strengthen peace and eradicate extreme poverty would be carried out.

4. The pending agenda included the identification, together with UNHCR, of the most appropriate durable solution, essentially by means of voluntary repatriation, to the problem of the Guatemalan refugees located mostly in Mexico. The countries members of CIREFCA welcomed in that connection the progress made in the current negotiations designed to achieve a firm and lasting peace in Guatemala. The pending agenda of the Conference also included the promotion of human rights and democratic processes, the preservation of cultural values, and increased support for the integration of returnees and displaced persons. The member countries were convinced that by combatting the causes of displacement and social exclusion - and not only their consequences - they would be able to eradicate such phenomena from the region.

5. In order to achieve those goals they had committed their political will, imagination and experience, as well as ceaseless efforts. They were certain

that in the new phase which was opening up they would be able to count on the firm support of the international community and of the United Nations system.

6. Mrs. ALGOBSHAWI (Sudan) said that owing to its geographical location Sudan continued to have to cope with an influx of refugees which was having particularly adverse effects on its population and infrastructures. Sudan was convinced of the need to shelter the refugees but believed that the international community ought to try to find lasting solutions to the humanitarian problems and encourage voluntary repatriation. An agreement had been concluded in February 1993 for the repatriation of some 350,000 Ethiopian refugees. Sudan was currently completing the necessary preparations for the repatriation of 12,000 of them, planned for the end of October 1994, but that figure represented only a tiny part of the total number of refugees received in Sudan. Sudan would continue to work to achieve the signature of a tripartite agreement with Eritrea and UNHCR, but unfortunately Eritrea refused to sign. It had therefore had to be content with the signature on 6 September 1994 of a bilateral agreement with UNHCR for the voluntary repatriation of the Eritreans. A pilot project should be started up for the repatriation of about 25,000 refugees from that country. Sudan hoped that the agreement would be respected, even by non-signatories, and categorically refused to accept that repatriation should operate on the basis of selective criteria.

7. Sudan noted that the international community was very reluctant to assist the refugees and that financial assistance was declining year by year. Sudan was not rich but nevertheless continued to help the refugees in accordance with purely humanitarian principles. There was no doubt that political considerations had come into play and were adversely affecting the situation of the refugees. The European Union, for example, refused for political reasons to provide assistance for refugees in certain regions. It often happened as well that humanitarian missions left the country overnight without any obvious reason even though Sudan had already made every provision to facilitate their work.

8. Sudan believed that UNHCR funds were not fairly distributed among the countries sheltering refugees. In 1994, for example, two countries, one with 250,000 to 300,000 refugees and the other with 540,000, had received assistance of $US 24 million and 35 million respectively, whereas Sudan with more than 745,000 refugees had received only $US 12.6 million.

9. Sudan was resolutely fulfilling its international humanitarian obligations and had taken part in the humanitarian action for the receipt of refugees in its territory. It offered them many advantages, and some of them were even had land to farm. The refugees had total freedom of action and movement in Sudan, and many of them had received assistance with the completion of the necessary administrative formalities for engaging in commercial and other economic activities. The advantages enjoyed by the refugees in Sudan were comparable to those enjoyed by all foreigners engaging in commercial or economic activities. Sudan cared for the refugees without taking any political considerations into account. UNHCR, for its part, should fully discharge its responsibilities by contributing to the repair of the infrastructure which had been seriously damaged by the inflows of refugees, especially in the regions which had not been prepared to receive so many of them.

10. Sudan had not forgotten that there were also some 250,000 Sudanese refugees in neighbouring countries and noted with regret that they did not

always receive the protection to which they were entitled. Furthermore, several thousand Sudanese refugees were victims of coercion and discrimination involving certain co-called highly respectable persons. One Sudanese refugee in a brother country had been forced to leave because he had been accused of seeking to stir up discord and disorder. That was contrary to humanitarian practices. Refugees must enjoy assistance without distinction as to colour, race or social class, and the country concerned should correct the situation. Sudan was anxious to ensure that its citizens were protected in the neighbouring countries and wished to secure their voluntary repatriation, but it had run up against many obstacles. It appealed to UNHCR to play a positive role by convincing the countries sheltering Sudanese refugees to allow the Sudanese authorities to visit them. In Sudan the doors were always open to UNHCR and to anyone who wished to visit their fellow citizens who had taken refuge there.

11. Sudan had just been the scene of a crime against mankind. Twenty thousand Sudanese children had been kidnapped and land had been mined to prevent any countermeasures. Such acts were reprehensible and despicable, especially when they involved children who risked becoming involved in the war. Sudan urged UNHCR, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the various countries concerned and the whole international community to help it to rescue the children.

12. He had noted with surprise that a UNHCR report gave the impression that the war in the south of the country was due entirely to application of the Shariah. That information was totally false, for application of the Shariah as the fundamental law had been decided upon at the end of September 1983, whereas the war had begun much earlier, at the end of the summer of 1983. The war was due to the contemptible and hateful policies of colonialism. Christians and members of other religions could in fact practice their religion freely and were subject to no harassment.

13. It was asserted elsewhere in the report in question that the Government of Sudan favoured certain parties in the war in the south of the country. The Government had, however, tried to distribute food, including maize, to all the refugees, even in the conflict zone. Sudan had also opened its air space to enable foreign missions to cross the country to go to put an end to the war. Unfortunately, some United Nations staff members had been murdered in the region. Sudan could not accept the unjustified allegations contained in the UNHCR report. She wished moreover to add that the Sudanese Government had created a supreme peace council to be responsible for reconstruction in the south and had begun talks with the rebels in that region.

14. According to another paragraph in the report, the Sudanese Government had taken no action to solve the problems in the south of the country. That allegation was also totally unfounded. The Sudanese authorities had endeavoured to provide every possible facility for the refugees and immigrants as far as health, hygiene and education were concerned. They had tried to transfer to well organized refugee camps a number of rebels who had been wounded and could not receive the necessary medical assistance in the field. They had facilitated the movement of the United Nations missions. Anyone could come to see what was happening in the camps and gain a clear idea of the actual situation.

15. Sudan wanted the international organizations to verify the grounds for their assertions. The Sudanese delegation was following closely the efforts to

improve cooperation among the NGOs and the United Nations bodies. It thought that the recommendations made by the Oslo Conference in June 1994 should be reviewed and reformulated to bring them closer into line with the situation so that they could make a contribution to the implementation of various projects.

16. Mr. ENNACEUR (Tunisia), speaking on behalf of the President of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), paid a tribute to the High Commissioner for Refugees for the dedication which she had shown in the cause of refugees throughout the world and particularly in Africa, the continent which led the world in numbers of refugees with almost 40% of the total. Africa was particularly grateful to the donor countries and humanitarian organizations for the assistance which they had provided to refugees and displaced persons in Africa and for the efforts made to ease their suffering. OAU paid a tribute to the African countries bordering on the affected regions which had received and succoured the refugees at great cost to themselves.

17. The President of OAU was determined to spare no effort to strengthen the process of national conciliation among all the parties to the conflict and was endeavouring to help to create favourable conditions for the voluntary repatriation of the refugees. The international community should therefore support the OAU efforts by encouraging donor countries to offer financial backing for the central administration of the machinery for prevention and settlement of conflicts in Africa and to give priority to economic and social development in Africa so as to establish there a climate favourable to democracy and respect for human rights. While they welcomed the increased assistance for refugees, the African countries thought that it should not be provided at the expense of development aid, because most of the population movements were due to inadequate development and the inability of some States to meet the essential needs of their people. It was certainly necessary to prevent the outbreak of conflicts by means of preventive diplomacy, but when such conflicts had emerged any further outbreaks should also be prevented by establishing a lasting peace and carrying out for that purpose sustained and concerted measures in the economic, social, cultural and humanitarian fields.

18. In his message to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the OAU Refugees Convention, the President of the Republic of Tunisia and current President of OAU had stated that the strengthening of security and stability and economic and social development ought to be able to ensure the return of all the refugees to their own countries in Africa. He had also repeated his appeal to the international community and primarily the donor States to make aid to Africa one of their main priorities. In a message addressed to the group of seven most industrialized countries the President of Tunisia had described the recent events in Rwanda and had emphasized the need for the international community to provide effective support for the African efforts and for the OAU conflict settlement machinery and the need for close coordination between OAU and the United Nations on the one hand and cooperation among all States and peace-loving forces on the other.

19. The thirtieth OAU summit, held in Tunis in June 1994, had taken a very close interest in the persistent problem of refugees and had adopted a series of practical measures in that connection. The African heads of State and Government had expressed their profound gratitude to UNHCR and to the countries bordering on the areas of tension which had received refugees. They had stressed the need to correct the deterioration of the economy and environment in

the countries of asylum and the harmful effects which the inflows of refugees had had on public services and the development process in those countries. There was hence a need to coordinate the work of humanitarian organizations and provide adequate financial, medical and material assistance to persons in difficulty and in particular to the most vulnerable groups. The participants in the OAU summit had proposed in that connection the convening, in December 1994 at the latest in Bujumbura, Burundi, of a regional conference on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Central Africa. UNHCR and the donor countries had given that proposal a favourable reception.

20. Events had been organized to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the OAU Refugees Convention. The High Commissioner had made contributions to them and had stated her determination to support the strengthening of the Convention and the general cooperation between her Office and OAU. The current President of OAU had addressed a message to the participants in the events in which he had argued inter alia for radical long-term management of the refugee problem and for preventive action to strengthen the security and socio-economic development of the African continent, in the knowledge that the prospects for world security and stability depended largely on development.

21. The Tunisian delegation had noted with interest the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the world conference on the PARinAC process held in Oslo in June 1994. The African countries, which had taken an active part in the process since the preparatory meetings for the conference, believed that it had a paramount role to play in the review of all aspects of the refugee question. The complexity of the refugee problem now demanded in fact better collaboration between all the parties, Governments, United Nations bodies, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The African countries therefore hoped that the implementation of the Plan of Action would help to strengthen the capacities of local humanitarian organizations and their participation in the various stages of refugee assistance and relief operations.

22. Mr. VILAGOSI (Hungary) said that the reception of refugees was an imperative of the international community and stressed that Hungary had a long tradition of providing asylum for the persecuted. Its refugee policy, which was based on a national consensus, enjoyed the support of the Hungarian people and the cooperation of the NGOs concerned. In Hungary many refugees were accommodated in families. Since 1988, 126,000 asylum-seekers had been given refuge.

23. Hungary was firmly committed to international cooperation for the protection of refugees. Its collaboration with UNHCR had begun five years earlier, following the dismantling of the iron curtain, when it had been confronted by severe and unforeseen humanitarian problems. In addition to the Southern Slav crisis, refugee and migratory movements were now affecting a large part of the territory of the former Soviet Union. That development demanded concerted action by the High Commissioner in a regional context. Hungary was in favour of convening an international conference of the States concerned, the idea of which had been put forward by the High Commissioner, to discuss the complex problems of refugees, displaced persons and other persons caught up in the flows of forced migration, with a view to determining a comprehensive strategy.

24. Hungary hoped that closer cooperation would be established between UNHCR and the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Such cooperation ought to be designed to address the issues raised by forced displacements, to monitor carefully the situation in the countries of origin before voluntary repatriations took place, and to pay close attention to the security of the returnees with full respect for their fundamental rights as laid down in the international legal instruments. Such cooperation would be extremely timely and useful in the context of a settlement of the Yugoslav crisis.

25. Moreover, taking into account the risks associated with population movements in the CSCE region and the generally recognized concept that the sphere of competence of UNHCR covered all the issues raised by such movements - from conflict prevention to conflict solution and resettlement - the High Commissioner should be encouraged to establish closer links with the CSCE process. The growing challenges facing the international community also called for the strengthening of cooperation between UNHCR and its natural partners, the NGOs. The far-reaching recommendations contained in the Oslo Plan of Action might serve as a suitable framework for joint efforts to give practical effect to the PARinAC process.

26. The Hungarian delegation noted with satisfaction that senior UNHCR officials had contributed to the work of several forums and conferences on refugee matters held in Hungary and it hoped that such assistance would be continued. One of the principles of Hungary's refugee policies was that every nation or community had an inalienable right to live in its homeland and to have its fundamental rights respected there. Voluntary repatriation remained of course the preferred solution to the refugee problem but, when it was not feasible, settlement of refugees in the asylum country often proved to be a suitable solution, even on a temporary basis. The asylum countries must therefore have the benefit of international solidarity.

27. Reception, medical care, accommodation and feeding of refugees, and administration of refugee centres had all become well established routine activities in Hungary, but it now had to tackle a completely new task of a different kind: solving the problem of the thousands of refugees who had been living in the camps for several years. In theory the most obvious solution seemed to be integration, but in practice several problems arose: most of the temporarily protected people did not wish to settle in Hungary but preferred to return to their country of origin or settle in a third country, although their chances of reintegration were diminishing rapidly; a large number of the temporarily protected persons were elderly or disabled, and a mental institution even had patients needing permanent medical care who had no hope of "integration". In fact, in view of its current economic difficulties Hungary could envisage the successful integration of only a tiny number of temporarily protected persons.

28. Support for refugees and temporarily protected persons and the establishment of a new type of care system required enormous financial and social efforts. Hungary had started several new activities to meet the demands, including: an integration programme for refugees who might be settled in Hungary; improvement of the infrastructure and of the social and medical services in the reception centres - with special attention given to psychological training; establishment of kindergarten, elementary and secondary education in the mother tongue of the children in the refugee centres;

organization of vocational training courses for the younger generation; annual trips for all refugee children to holiday resorts in various places in the country; and introduction of special arrangements to enable the many Islamic refugees to exercise their religion.

29. The success of such programmes would require continuous assistance from UNHCR. Coordination of the various refugee agencies and organizations had been considerably improved within the country and internationally as well by the establishment of the Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs. Cooperation with the UNHCR office in Budapest had become more direct and operational.

30. Hungary was continuing its legislation and codification work and hoped that a comprehensive refugee law consistent with European standards would be adopted during the current session of Parliament. It would highly appreciate any international assistance which could help in that work, especially the further participation of UNHCR officials and experts. Hungary itself would continue to support UNHCR action.

31. Mr. MAELAND (Norway) said that his delegation fully associated itself with the statement made by Germany on behalf of the members of the European Union and the acceding States, but he wished to address some issues which the Norwegian Government regarded as particularly important at the present critical juncture in the work of UNHCR and its Executive Committee.

32. Since the previous session of the Committee the pattern of large-scale conflicts and humanitarian disasters had continued unabated. Progress had been made in some parts of southern Africa, Central America and the Middle East, but the former Yugoslavia was about to enter its third winter of war. Several countries were experiencing ethnic violence, sectarian conflicts and the breakdown of State structures. The humanitarian tragedy in Rwanda was far from over. The net outcome of such conflicts was massive refugee flows and mounting numbers of internally displaced persons.

33. The Committee had a special responsibility to assist the High Commissioner in meeting the increasing demands. It must continue to work with her Office to determine strategies, priorities and means of implementation. It must also decide how to strengthen the partnership with other agencies and NGOs. As the High Commissioner had pointed out in her statement, the task was to establish a viable agenda for humanitarian action in the future. In discharging that responsibility, the members of the Committee must, first of all, seek to secure the unique protection mandate of UNHCR; the tools of the past must be adapted to the needs of the present. Observance both of fundamental human rights and of the principles of refugee and humanitarian law by the parties concerned was imperative in that regard.

34. The refugee problem was reaching critical proportions in almost all parts of the world, straining the established structures and institutions of international protection. The 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, although initially designed to provide a legal framework to protect individuals fleeing persecution, remained the cornerstone of international refugee law and the only universal instruments for refugee protection. Since the number of persons in need of international protection had escalated dramatically, there was a need to address more systematically the protection issues in situations of mass outflows resulting from war or conflict.

35. Norway agreed with UNHCR that new avenues must be explored to ensure, in specific situations, the international protection of persons in need even if they sometimes fell outside the immediate scope of the established legal instruments. Temporary protection constituted a useful device in that respect, as it facilitated instant international protection. Increased regional harmonization of national legislation on refugee protection was another option worth considering. A comprehensive but not binding declaration of guiding principles for international protection, the idea of which had been put forward by the High Commissioner, opened up other interesting vistas of how the present gaps in the international framework might be bridged. The Norwegian Government was grateful to UNHCR for having examined the protection concepts so thoroughly and for having placed the issue in a broader context. Norway looked forward to giving further consideration with UNHCR to the means of translating such ideas into reality.

36. Secondly, humanitarian action alone could not prevent refugee crises or provide solutions to them. As the High Commissioner had pointed out in her introductory statement, humanitarian action increasingly took place within more comprehensive approaches to conflict management. In such circumstances humanitarian action had both a value of its own in bringing relief to persons in need and an added value in the wider political effort. Humanitarian assistance and reintegration programmes could often be of vital importance in bringing different sections of war-torn societies together, both during the emergency phase and in the phase of post-conflict peace-building. The success of any comprehensive effort required an overall strategy with clear roles, sufficient resources and a clear division of work among the agencies concerned. The lessons learned from Rwanda suggested that that part of the United Nations effort could be improved. The system failures alleged in some quarters reflected negatively on all the agencies involved and on their member Governments. Humanitarian action was particularly important during the emergency phase of conflicts, and emergency preparedness was therefore vital. It presupposed a solid organizational base for contingency planning, rapid deployment, and coordination of the overall humanitarian effort. Most often, it would be necessary for UNHCR to draw on resources in member countries and NGOs. The Norwegian Government was often impressed by the efforts made by UNHCR to improve its emergency preparedness and it would continue to work with the Office and the other humanitarian agencies to strengthen even further their collective capacity to support that crucial endeavour.

37. Thirdly, since humanitarian action often took place during conflicts or wars, it was necessary to continue to refine the relationship between that type of action and peace-keeping operations. Traditionally the two had been kept apart in order to safeguard the non-political nature of humanitarian action, something which remained a paramount objective. But in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Somalia and other conflicts, military protection by United Nations peace-keepers had been necessary to ensure access for humanitarian relief and protection of humanitarian personnel. Increasingly, humanitarian operations had to cooperate with peace-keeping forces, political mediators, human rights observers and others in comprehensive United nations operations. Increased cooperation with military and civil-defence establishments would be necessary in order to improve logistics and the overall response capacity. Greatest care should be taken to protect the humanitarian space in such concerted operations. Humanitarian action took place in a political context, but any attempt to politicize protection or the access of humanitarian relief must be resisted. Force should

be used only as a very last resort, and any situation where the humanitarian effort might become hostage to the parties to the conflict must be avoided. The bodies coordinating the overall effort must pay heed to the humanitarian considerations.

38. Fourthly, the need to secure a continuum from relief to sustainable development remained important. It would always be vital for UNHCR to ensure conditions which would allow for the safe return of refugees. Peace-building required a political process to prevent the outbreak of new conflicts (agreements on the cessation of hostilities, political accords involving comprehensive confidence-building measures, national reconciliation and respect for human rights). It sometimes also implied the reconstruction of basic State infrastructure such as the judicial, health and education services and the reestablishment of a civic society. The repatriation of refugees should be seen in conjunction with such processes. The ideal environment for the return of refugees could be provided only by a solution of the conflict, but that was rarely achieved. Thus repatriation often took place in a context of continuing instability or insecurity. Providing protection for returnees therefore gave rise to major new challenges. The deployment of human rights monitors in such situations was a new instrument which merited more support. The active involvement of the parties concerned was a basic prerequisite to overcoming the obstacles to protection in fragile situations. Repatriation should therefore take place within a framework coordinated by UNHCR and in accordance with its guidelines.

39. Fifthly, several of the humanitarian tragedies were so great and of such complexity that it was beyond the capacity of UNHCR alone to deal with the challenges of prevention and solution. The Norwegian Government supported the High Commissioner in her catalytic role and her efforts to forge and reinforce partnerships with various intergovernmental and non-governmental actors; it had thus been happy to host the world PARinAC conference in June 1994. The Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at that meeting contained an impressive number of useful recommendations on how to strengthen the operational relationship between UNHCR and NGOs. The protocol agreed between the High Commissioner and the NGO community constituted a solid blueprint for building a viable partnership. The continuation of that process deserved the active support of the Executive Committee and of member States. However, the PARinAC process would be judged by its practical results, essentially in the field.

40. He emphasized in conclusion that it was necessary to work towards better burden-sharing in the provision of resources and the determination of the priorities for their use. For many years Norway had been among the leading contributors to UNHCR (in both real and per capita terms). For the current year it had already given 218 million Norwegian kroner to the High Commissioner's programme and now announced an additional cash contribution of five million kroner to the UNHCR programme in the former Yugoslavia and, subject to parliamentary approval, a further contribution of five million kroner to the repatriation operation in Mozambique.

41. The structural underfunding of the general programme was worrying, and the Executive Committee should issue a strong call for better burden-sharing. Norway also joined the members of the European Union in stressing the need to broaden the donor base. While encouraging UNHCR to pursue its strategic policy development and programme management in order to ensure the most efficient use

of resources, Norway called on the Office to continue to work closely with all relevant parts of the United Nations system in order to be better prepared to meet the overwhelmingly complex emergencies and to work jointly for the establishment of favourable conditions for solutions and prevention.

42. Mr. KRYLOV (Observer for the Russian Federation) said that his delegation hoped that the current session of the Executive Committee would be the last one in which it participated as an observer and that by the next session the process of admitting Russia to full membership in the Committee would have been completed. Many considerations, including legal, ethical and practical ones, argued for such a move since Russia was undeniably playing an active role in the efforts of the international community to protect refugees and other forced migrants.

43. Developments in regions as different and as remote from each other as Central Africa, Bosnia, Abkhazia and Somalia had made everyone aware of the bitter notion of humanitarian disaster. It was tragic that the international community had failed to meet the challenges of the times. The intensity of the human suffering involved compelled not only a response to the situation but also reflection on the establishment of effective mechanisms to prevent events from running out of control.

44. In all regions of the world the humanitarian disasters had the same deep roots: social and economic instability, the rise of nationalism and xenophobia, ethnic, clan and religious intolerance, and disregard for basic human rights. For Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union, those were not abstract notions but everyday realities. The peculiarity of Russia's situation was that its humanitarian problems persisted unabated even as the democratic reforms continued. Russia had to address new problems of a magnitude which exceeded its capacity to provide solutions. It stood in immediate proximity to areas of instability and regional conflict, mainly in the Caucasus and Central Asia. The flows of refugees and other forced migrants from those regions to Russia were increasing and now totalled nearly two million people. The swelling tide of ethnic Russians wishing to settle in Russia was in itself a source of great worry, for even in a relatively safe country such as Uzbekistan their numbers had grown by a factor of eight between January and August.

45. Russia also faced other great difficulties connected with the increasing numbers of refugees from countries of Asia and Africa, the majority of whom regarded Russia as only a temporary refuge on their way to Western Europe or America. But the tougher entry conditions in some countries which traditionally accepted refugees brought a growing danger that such persons would settle in Russia, which might thus become a kind of "reservation" for illegal immigrants.

46. Russia was perfectly aware that the solution of its problems was primarily its own responsibility; that was not only a moral duty but also an obligation under the many international instruments to which it was a party. Some progress had been made in the application of the 1951 Convention. For example, a federal migration programme had recently been approved, and the Government had taken a number of decisions on the regulation of migration, determination of status, relations with refugees, and uncontrolled migrations. Progress had also been made with regard to relations among the partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). An agreement on assistance to refugees and other forced migrants had been signed and a convention on the rights of ethnic

minorities drafted. Much had also been done to stabilize the economic and political situation in the CIS countries; that was without doubt the most effective way of reducing the number of refugees and migrants.

47. Russia was very grateful for the moral and material support given by international organizations, in particular UNHCR, and was anxious to gain more experience of joint activities such as the implementation of the quadripartite agreement on the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons from Abkhazia. The next undertaking would be the joint preparation of conditions for the return of refugees from North Ossetia and Tajikistan.

48. Russia believed that its cooperation with UNHCR could be substantially expanded and hoped that the Office would give more attention to the situation in Russia. No one of common sense could wish Russia to become a source of instability, a country producing uncontrollable flows of aggressively minded refugees. In that connection the regions of Russia accepting refugees should be priority recipients of the technical and other assistance provided by UNHCR and other international organizations; such cooperation should be broadened to include the training of Russian experts in refugee matters, and UNDP projects could be used for that purpose.

49. Russia was absolutely in favour of broad international cooperation which might lead to the convening of an international conference on refugees and forced migrants in the territory of the former Soviet Union. The purpose of such a conference would be to enable the participants to analyze objectively the existing and potential problems and outline a comprehensive programme to resolve the issues and prevent new flows of refugees. The conference could also help to make public opinion in the participating States more aware of the need to help refugees. Russia itself had already begun without delay to make preparations for such a conference by drawing up a draft national report and establishing a legal basis for the definition of refugee status, and by improving the coordination among refugee agencies. The consultations which Russia had held with many States had confirmed their interest in holding such a conference. That was an encouraging sign which demonstrated that the international community did not intend to distance itself from the problems of the post-Soviet space; Russia was grateful to it for that.

50. However, Russia did not think only of itself and was aware that membership of the Executive Committee involved participation in the international refugee efforts in other countries. It was taking part in UNHCR operations in Yugoslavia and had already made a contribution of $US 500,000 for Rwanda. It was ready to take part in UNHCR operations in several countries of the former USSR, for example in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Russia was also providing bilateral humanitarian assistance to a number of countries, including Albania, Cuba, Colombia, India, Madagascar and Afghanistan.

51. Russia was seeking to become an active member of the Executive Committee and had prepared proposals concerning measures to prevent humanitarian disasters. It was in favour of creating a system for the exchange of advance information about mass flows of refugees and for the elaboration and early adoption of appropriate measures to prevent and reduce mass exoduses. In the establishment of such a system, account should be taken of the emergency situation early-warning measures which were being drafted by the Department of

Humanitarian Affairs. Coordination between the various elements of the United Nations system concerned with humanitarian issues should also be improved.

52. One of the most pertinent of current issues was the relationship between mass violations of human rights, forced displacements, and threats to peace and international security. Like UNHCR, Russia was in favour of the integration of human rights monitoring arrangements as a preventive measure into peace-keeping operations and peace negotiations. Only joint efforts by the international community which took due account of the potential of each participant and specific national and regional conditions would make it possible to avoid such tragedies as Rwanda, Sarajevo and Somalia. As the High Commissioner had rightly said, it was by protecting individuals that tensions were reduced in a society and global human security enhanced. That was the only way to lay a solid basis for the sustained and progressive development of mankind in the next century, when the degree of effective respect for a person's rights and satisfaction of his needs would become the true criterion of the progress of civilization.

53. Mr. DEMESKA (Ethiopia) said that the practices of humanitarian aid must be based on an analysis of the root causes of the refugee problem and be consistent with the principles of international solidarity and cost-sharing. In most cases, the root causes were to be found in the management of social, economic and political problems and in the failure to respect human rights. It was therefore important, if the refugee problem was to be solved, to consider the constraints on sustainable socio-economic and political growth, not only in one specific country but also at the subregional, regional and global levels, in the spirit of the international instruments concerning refugee protection.

54. With regard to the approach to programming, which perhaps reflected the flaws inherent in the guidelines for humanitarian aid policy, it seemed that priority had so far been given to ad hoc arrangements without any genuine attempt to define methods which could link emergency and relief assistance to activities to harness the potential of the recipients, i.e. the refugees and returnees, something which could only facilitate the search for durable solutions. In order to promote such durable solutions and especially voluntary repatriation, an effort should be made, in parallel with refugee care and maintenance activities, to synchronize relief operations in asylum countries with measures to facilitate the reintegration of refugees in their countries of origin. Additional funding should be provided for that type of action, for it could make a great contribution to the maintenance or restoration of peace in various subregions or regions and would result in lower costs in the end.

55. The Ethiopian Government was relatively satisfied to see that a large part of international protection activities was devoted to the Horn of Africa, where the numbers of refugees and returnees illustrated the sociological, economic, social, psychological and political forces at play in the subregion. In its view, the implementation of a global plan of action could do much to overcome the obstacles to the restoration of people-focused sustainable development, i.e. development which met the needs of present generations without compromising the future. But the volume of international assistance was not nearly as big as it could be. The case of Ethiopia was particularly illuminating. At present it was providing sanctuary for slightly more than 284,000 refugees from neighbouring and more distant countries. It was also attending to the reintegration of about 865,000 Ethiopians who, after the fall of the dictatorship, had voluntarily opted to return home, either by their own means or

under an organized repatriation operation. The assistance furnished to such returnees was additional to the food relief distributed to about seven million Ethiopian drought-victims, the purposes of which included the prevention of exodus.

56. As part of the search for durable solutions to the refugee problem the Ethiopian Government was seeking to promote voluntary repatriation, as was demonstrated by the gathering together of Somali refugees in camps in the east of the country, in September 1994, as the first phase of their repatriation. The number of refugees in the various camps totalled 181,000 (but 631,000 ration cards had been issued). The Ethiopian delegation earnestly hoped that the voluntary repatriation programme would be speeded up. But experience had shown that the international programmes for refugees and returnees often fell short of expectations owing to inadequate content or funding, not to mention the tardy use of the appropriated funds in the field owing to disbursement delays. In such circumstances, and even though Governments sought more rational management of programmes and improved cost-effectiveness of the corresponding support services, it was ever more difficult for the countries and for the international humanitarian community which supported their efforts to solve the increasingly tragic problem of refugees.

57. It was therefore clear that the rationalization and streamlining effort must be continued. In particular, there should be better coordination of the work of subregional and international intergovernmental organizations and of UNHCR and Governments in order to manage the general and special programmes more effectively by giving greater attention to the needs of women and children and to environmental protection. Support must be given to the programmes and projects which sought to combine activities for refugees and returnees (relief and reintegration assistance) with more general activities to promote sustainable development in the countries receiving refugees and/or returnees, as well as to the establishment at the global, regional and national levels, within the framework of the refugee and returnee programmes, of a genuine continuum involving relief operations, refugee reintegration work, and development activities. Lastly, more vigorous support, including the provision of technical assistance to national implementation officials, should be given to the efforts made by the countries themselves to enhance their capacity to deal with refugees.

58. Mr. FASEHUN (Nigeria) said that Nigeria saluted the High Commissioner for her courage in carrying out humanitarian activities which sometimes extended beyond the mandate of UNHCR. Although that mandate, as set out in the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, had never been changed, the tasks entrusted to the Office had been vastly expanded. Within the resources made available to it, UNHCR had sought to cope with the increasing numbers of refugees - there were now some 20 million throughout the world - and to solve the extremely varied humanitarian problems arising from internal upheavals and the collapse of States.

59. However, UNHCR appeared to be overwhelmed by the scale of forced migrations - of which the tragedy of Rwanda provided an illustration. In fact, what had happened in Rwanda did indeed demonstrate that it was essential to address the root causes of refugee problems before they degenerated and to devise preventive measures. But it was for the intergovernmental political institutions and not UNHCR to take that kind of initiative.

60. It was true that the primary role of UNHCR was to protect persons fleeing persecution in their State of origin. But protection, important as it was, must not be an end in itself. It must instead be seen as a way of mitigating the impact of forced displacement while solutions were being found for its underlying causes.

61. The Nigerian delegation acknowledged the efforts made by UNHCR to enable refugees to learn and acquire skills before their voluntary return to their countries of origin, and it thought that the teaching of tolerance and mutual respect ought to be an important component in the education programmes for refugees. Other agencies also had an important role to play in improving the quality of life of refugees and preparing them to resume normal life. The Bretton Woods institutions should help to finance the rebuilding of infrastructure and overall economic development in order to encourage repatriation. In the search for durable solutions to the refugee problem it was not enough to address the issue of poverty and underdevelopment; an effort must also be made to deal with the other factors which created the problem, including in particular intolerance, social tensions and economic deprivation.

62. In order to tackle the problem of internally displaced persons, who were more numerous than refugees, a specific mechanism with a clearly defined mandate must be established. However, pending the introduction of such a mechanism, it was UNHCR which should assist displaced persons.

63. The Nigerian delegation expressed its profound appreciation to donor countries and countries which, despite their meagre resources, received refugees. It also acknowledged the immense contributions of numerous NGOs operating under difficult conditions. Nigeria had contributed and would continue to contribute, within its resources, material and financial support for refugees and internally displaced persons. As was generally known, Nigeria had been playing a leading role in the search for a solution to the Liberian crisis. It had also supported humanitarian assistance activities not only in Africa but also in other regions of the world. Despite the financial cost of such action, Nigeria would continue to play its part in the laudable work of refugee relief.

64. In conclusion he paid a tribute to the various Governments and NGOs and to UNHCR, UNICEF and ICRC for the efforts which they had made to provide desperately needed emergency relief for the victims of armed conflicts. The considerable increase in the number of refugees and internally displaced persons and the complexity of the issues represented an overwhelming challenge which the international community must take up by means of determined and effective action. The Nigerian delegation urged UNHCR to cooperate more actively with all relevant organizations for the benefit of refugees and it invited the Governments of donor countries to provide the Office with greater assistance. If a comprehensive and lasting solution was to be found, initiatives on the political front must be complemented by an effective programme of economic and humanitarian aid.

65. Mr. LARSEN (Denmark) said that his delegation associated itself fully with the statement made at a previous meeting by the representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union but it wished to make some observations on the two major challenges facing UNHCR: the challenge of growth and the challenge of protection.

66. The first challenge was by no means a new one. Over the past 10 years UNHCR had had to cope with a steady growth in the total number of refugees. But a new factor had now been added to the situation - the increasing complexity of emergencies giving rise to mass displacement. So far UNHCR had been able to cope with that development and, under Mrs. Ogata's leadership, it had skilfully managed the rapid expansion of its capacities. Events over the past year also showed that UNHCR had considerably improved its emergency response capacity. In that context the Office was to be commended for its effective and quick response to the Rwanda emergency.

67. Nevertheless, it seemed that the time had come to address the question of whether, with a total budget of $US 1.3 billion, UNHCR had reached the structural limits of its growth. Further growth would not of course be impossible - and UNHCR, if called upon, would know how to shoulder its responsibilities - but it would certainly add to the already perceptible structural strains. What should now be done - before the next major crisis erupted - was to look at ways of easing some of the strains. Some measures would have to be taken by the High Commissioner herself, some by other United Nations organizations, and some would require a concerted effort by the international community.

68. First of all, there was an urgent need to develop further the division of labour and the coordination between the relevant actors in major emergencies and to look into the gaps in the response capacity of the United Nations system. If the response capacity of UNHCR alone was improved, without a corresponding improvement in that of its partners, the result would be merely to add to the strains. A more efficient division of labour reflecting the comparative advantage of each organization was necessary. Too often UNHCR had had to take upon itself responsibilities which others ought to have borne. Any improvement in that area would require concerted action by the governing bodies of a number of United Nations organizations and programmes and, accordingly, some harmonization of the policies of member countries. One way would be to see to it that the Inter-Agency Standing Committee played a more effective role.

69. Strengthening of the cooperation between UNHCR and its implementing partners, as foreseen in the PARinAC process, would help to ease the financial burden on UNHCR and improve programme planning and delivery. The Danish delegation strongly supported such a development and hoped that the envisaged closer cooperation between the Office and NGOs would be based on clear performance criteria and regular performance reviews.

70. The extraordinary dimensions of the Rwanda crisis had demonstrated the need to consider innovative ways of strengthening both the emergency preparedness of UNHCR and its capacity to cope with large-scale demands. The machinery for the provision of self-contained service packages as a means of involving donor Governments and NGOs in programme delivery was an interesting initiative which should be taken further. To that end, some of the existing standby arrangements might serve as a model for more comprehensive ones covering not only personnel but also programme delivery within specifically defined areas. In that connection his Government had decided to establish a new comprehensive emergency response capacity to be operated by the Foreign Ministry.

71. The increased demands on UNHCR had accentuated the need, now greater than ever before, for efficient management of resources. At a time when donor countries, including Denmark, were emphasizing the need for strict application of the principle of accountability and enhanced efficiency in the United Nations system, the Danish delegation noted with appreciation the progress made by the Office in programme management and delivery. It welcomed the speedy implementation of the recommendations of the internal Working Group on Programme Management and Operational Capacity and the fact that UNHCR had initiated a major overhaul of its personnel management system. But there was a clear need to look further into the management of resources. The Danish delegation would like the establishment of the Inspection and Evaluation Unit and the strengthening of the policy planning capacity to lead to an even stronger focus on the efficient management of resources.

72. On the financing of UNHCR operations, which was a problem for donors to deal with, the Danish delegation was glad that the Subcommittee on Administrative and Financial Matters was going to look into the broader question of how to finance operations and try to determine inter alia whether the distinction between general and special programmes was still meaningful. What was important was to secure a more stable and predictable funding base for UNHCR programmes. As Denmark was one of the seven donors which financed 70% of the general programmes, it would moreover urge that a major overhaul of the funding system should be undertaken, with a view to fairer burden-sharing among donors and securing a considerable expansion of the donor base.

73. Turning to the second major challenge facing UNHCR, that of protection, he observed that the Note on International Protection submitted to the Executive Committee was devoted to a thorough examination of the legal instruments available to meet the needs of international protection. That timely examination had identified gaps in the existing instruments, in particular with regard to the protection of persons fleeing armed conflict. Denmark would welcome a discussion of such gaps, for without the necessary tools neither UNHCR or the asylum countries would be able to meet the challenge of protection. However, it was important to note that one major gap in the current international protection regime stemmed from the fact that the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol were not yet truly universal instruments. Some countries had still not acceded to them, while others continued to apply geographical limitations. Therefore, a call to all States for universal accession to the Convention and the Protocol must be the point of departure for any discussion of the need for new instruments or guidelines.

74. Furthermore, the international response to the mass flow of refugees from the former Yugoslavia seemed to indicate that concerted international action coordinated by UNHCR was an efficient way of dealing with the protection aspects of major displacements of population. The increasing use of temporary protection programmes made it more necessary than every before to establish a continuous dialogue between countries and UNHCR, a dialogue which Denmark - which was providing temporary protection to some 20,000 people from the former Yugoslavia - had already undertaken.

75. He wished to announce in conclusion that, subject to parliamentary approval, the Danish Government intended shortly to make several new contributions. Those contributions, amounting to approximately 56 million

Danish kroner, or about $US 9 million, would bring the total Danish contribution for 1994 to almost 210 million Danish kroner, or about $US 33 million.

76. Mr. ALI SHAH (Pakistan) said that his delegation wished to inform the Executive Committee that the repatriation operation undertaken by UNHCR in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan and the other United Nations agencies concerned had enabled more than half of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan to return home. However, Pakistan still had more than 1.6 million Afghan refugees on its territory (1.4 million according to UNHCR figures), and the events in Afghanistan since 1993, and particularly since January 1994, had badly upset the repatriation process. It had slowed down considerably, and Pakistan was also having to cope with a fresh influx of refugees. More than 160,000 had arrived since May 1992. That was in addition to the Afghan displaced persons, some 120,000 of whom were languishing in refugee camps near Jalalabad.

77. The presence in Pakistan of millions of Afghan refugees accompanied by large numbers of livestock had caused enormous ecological damage over the past 14 years. In that connection the Pakistan delegation requested UNHCR to urge donors to provide generous assistance for the rehabilitation of the damaged areas.

78. Despite the repatriation efforts made by UNHCR with the support of the Government of Pakistan, 1.4 million Afghan refugees were still forced to live in camps in Pakistan where their survival depended on UNHCR and WFP. It seemed that those two agencies were planning to phase out their care, maintenance and feeding programmes for the Afghan refugees in Pakistan by September 1995. Such a move would certainly place severe pressure on Pakistan's economy and add to the hardships of the Afghan refugees. There also seemed to be a plan to encourage the settlement of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Such an idea was unacceptable for various social, economic and political reasons both to the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan and to the Afghan refugees themselves.

79. The repatriation and social reintegration of the refugees in Afghanistan depended on the creation of peaceful conditions in that country. UNHCR could play a role in that connection by encouraging donors to undertake the repair and rehabilitation work envisaged in the UNDP action plan for Afghanistan.

80. Mr. CHERROT (Uganda) said that the situation of refugees and displaced persons in the world seemed to have taken a turn for the worse since the last meeting of the Executive Committee. The problem, which had its roots in poverty, poor leadership, greed and other situations giving rise to conflict, demanded a willingness to change on the part of the countries of origin and a commitment on the part of the international community.

81. The recent Addis Ababa symposium on refugees held under the auspices of OAU and UNHCR was a clear testimony of the will of the international community. However, Africa must recognize that the problem of its refugees was primarily an African problem. Uganda itself was being overwhelmed by an influx of refugees, particularly from southern Sudan. While reserving his right to comment later on the statement made earlier in the meeting by the delegation of Sudan, he said that the total number of Somali refugees registered in Uganda was close to 250,000, that the number of Somali asylum- seekers was estimated at 3,000, and that more than 10,000 refugees had arrived from Rwanda, not to mention the Rwandese who were entering Uganda via Zaire. Those circumstances created a

state of insecurity which provided even less justification for the attitude of certain neighbouring States which continued to regard the humanitarian asylum granted by Uganda to their nationals as a hostile act.

82. Uganda's infrastructure had been virtually destroyed by several decades of war and it had had to cope with the return of more than 500,000 Ugandans since the establishment of the new Government of national reconciliation. Although some progress was beginning to be made with the repatriation of the exiles, the Government had been overwhelmed by the arrival of hundreds of thousands of Sudanese refugees. If Uganda was to continue to play its role as an asylum country, humanitarian aid must be linked to development aid. In that connection the Ugandan delegation requested UNHCR to help the Ministry responsible for refugee affairs to carry out a socio-economic survey to determine the impact of the refugees on the Ugandan population. The conclusions of such a survey would then form the basis for the assistance requests made to donors.

83. The environment had also been damaged by refugees seeking fuel and building materials, and an integrated programme must be devised which combined reforestation with other relevant aspects of agriculture and water-resource management. It would therefore be useful for UNHCR environment experts to review their recommendations in the light of the latest technological advances in agriculture and water-resource management.

84. Voluntary repatriation was of course the most desirable solution to the refugee problem but it was also the most difficult to implement. In order to facilitate the voluntary return of Rwandese refugees to their country, UNHCR and the donors should help the new Government of Rwanda to work out a sustainable resettlement programme which accommodated the differing interests of the people of Rwanda.

85. Since the beginning of the exodus of Rwandese refugees to the United Republic of Tanzania and Zaire, the refugee camps in Uganda had suffered constant shortages of food which had often sparked off riots. The Ugandan Government reaffirmed its commitment to the refugee cause but it could no longer tolerate criminal acts committed against its nationals in the camps.

86. It had set aside for the resettlement of refugees land with a holding capacity of 75,000 persons, including 8,000 hectares allocated to Sudanese refugees. The UNHCR office in Kampala had been urged to take swift action to enable the refugees located close to the border to be resettled on that land.

87. In conclusion the Ugandan delegation wished to thank all the United Nations and voluntary agencies which had helped it to cope with the refugee burden. It expressed its gratitude to the donor community for its continued moral and material support and to UNHCR for adopting an assistance policy covering both refugees and internally displaced persons.

88. Mr. AKTAN (Turkey) said that his delegation regretted that the effects of armed conflicts and media pressures forced the international community to take humanitarian action rather than to examine the root causes of the tragedies which produced refugees and displaced persons. In such circumstances, prevention remained an essential element of the UNHCR programme. However, it was difficult to forecast when a crisis might degenerate into a conflict and to sound the alarm in time. And there were some crisis-prone countries which knew

how to live with their problems. International intervention of a preventive nature in such cases might well accelerate the process rather than eliminate the possibility of a conflict.

89. Violence had always been part of history. What was new was the attempt to control violence by nurturing human rights and democracy in situations of conflict marked by anarchy or famine. Democracy and human rights required not only a socio-economic infrastructure but also a political order, a prior condition of which was respect for State sovereignty, a concept sometimes regarded as obsolete.

90. However, it was not history alone which condemned the crises in various countries of the world. It seemed that a sudden dislocation in international affairs had caused virtually simultaneous upheavals in a very large number of countries. Ethnic, religious or cultural disputes were not the causes of such dislocation; they were its effects, and it was not certain that a preventive approach would be effective. Such an approach concealed a humanitarian trap which was much more serious than it seemed at first sight. It concealed the terrible fact that a political order which had collapsed was being restored by violence and that the rule of law which was supposed to restrain coercion by the State would be instituted only at a later stage. In the interim, acts of violence of every kind were part and parcel of the process.

91. Another characteristic of the humanitarian trap was the obsessive tendency of the international community to promote ethnic, religious and cultural rights as a means of stifling potential conflicts without any regard for the traditional balances in the countries concerned and thus to contribute to the problems which it would later have to solve. Such a situation was to be found, for example, in developing countries where a disintegrated political left seemed to identify its own pitiful fate with the fate of ethnic groups which appeared repressed, marginalized or despised. The NGOs, most of which were acting out their existential problems in a dislocated manner, could only exacerbate the problems of others, which were fundamentally different from their own.

92. The purely humanitarian approach could not compensate for the collapse of the North-South dialogue or take the place of the political will and action which conflict situations demanded. That was why a new order which had certainly degenerated into empty rhetoric remained the only comprehensive response to the ills of the post-cold-war era.

93. In her Note on International Protection the High Commissioner, aware of the gaps in the international legal regime governing refugees, had put forward the notion of "temporary protection". That revolutionary concept was the product of a pragmatic approach. When applied in practice, temporary protection should be used on a case by case basis and for a clearly limited period. After that period, the protection of the persons concerned must be taken over by the whole international community. Temporary protection should preferably lead to early voluntary return to the country of origin, where the necessary preparations for that eventuality would have to have been made. Any other option might invite refoulement and thus the definitive refusal of that pragmatic solution. Such a flexible approach should be regarded as an expedient and not codified in any way.

94. Mr. EL-KARIB (Sudan), noting that the representative of Uganda had indicated his intention to comment later on the Sudanese statement, said that he wished to clear up any misunderstanding caused by the Arabic interpretation by repeating in English what his delegation had stated at the previous meeting. In its description of the situation of Sudanese refugees in neighbouring countries the Sudanese delegation had said that most of the 350,000 people concerned did not receive sufficient aid. That argument had in fact been repeated by the representative of Uganda in his appeal to the international community, in particular UNHCR. Sudan had also said that some of those refugees had been targeted by rebel movements which were trying to force them to take up arms against the Sudanese Government. In saying that, the Sudanese delegation had not intended to attack any other Government. Indeed, it had noted with gratitude that, despite the problems which it meant for them, those brother countries had been kind enough to agree to accept the refugees.

95. Mr. CHEBROT (Uganda) said that there was a difference between what the representative of Sudan had just said and the interpretation into English of the earlier Sudanese statement. He therefore requested the Secretariat to be kind enough to provide him with an English version of the exact wording of the Arabic text, of which he had a copy.

96. The Chairman said that the Secretariat would help to elucidate the matter on the basis of the original text.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.